

## My Brother's Keeper event introduces students to STEM careers

March 1, 2016



The Laboratory hosted students from the Santa Fe Indian School - Middle School for its first *My Brother's Keeper* event held on Monday, February 29. *My Brother's Keeper* is a nationally recognized event sponsored by the White House designed to inspire and excite students about careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

To tap the high energy and excitement of the students, Laboratory scientists helped students don protective gear and carry around equipment used in hazardous material response.

"The students love to get materially involved and they want to experience new things," said Glen Castro, a Special Education teacher at the Middle School. "This program helps students see beyond the horizon."

Students were given a tour of the galaxy at the Pajarito Educational Environment Center planetarium where they explored Mars with Roger Wiens. Wiens is the leader of the

team responsible for the ChemCam laser instrument on board the Curiosity Rover that has been exploring Mars since 2012. Students also took part in demonstrations on cryogenics and electrical circuits at the Bradbury Science Museum.

Having Laboratory employees serve as role models during the event helped drive the idea that there are career options at the Laboratory one might have never imagined.

“This has been important to all of us. I’m pretty sure a lot of students are uncertain about what they want to do after high school. This gave us perspective of what we *might* want to do,” said Janelle Atencio, an eighth grader from Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo.

Students had lunch with Laboratory employees who shared with them their educational and career paths. “It emphasizes the importance of math and science, and they get to see the application of it here at the Lab,” said Patricia Chavez, a health and nutrition teacher at the Middle School.

This is the second year of *My Brother’s Keeper* at the national level, however, it was the first event in Los Alamos. “Our hope for the students we reach today is that they begin to realize that they have opportunities whether at the Laboratory or elsewhere. They have the potential that any other person has but they first have to realize that potential and we can help guide them,” said Janelle Vigil-Maestas, Education Coordinator out of the Laboratory’s Community Relations and Partnerships Office.

The focus of *My Brother’s Keeper* events is placed on giving students a healthy start in entering school and being cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally ready to learn. Another key area for the events in introducing students to possible career opportunities to spark ideas for successfully entering the workforce.

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*Community Connections* features news and opportunities that grow out of the Laboratory’s Good Neighbor Pledge: “To partner with our neighbors on strengthening math and science learning, diversifying the economy and expanding community giving in northern New Mexico.”

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